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ABSTRACT

This paper presents recently completed case histories of three pairs of elementary schools (one urban pair, one rural pair, one suburban pair) that have been observed over a 7-year period during the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study, phases III and IV. These pairs of schools were studied extensively in 1984-85 and again in 1989-90, using staff interviews and classroom observations. Four distinct types of schools are described, including stable/more effective (2 schools), improving (2 schools), stable/less effective (1 school), and declining (1 school). The paper argues that historical case studies constitute the best methodology for exploring and understanding the stability of school effects over time. Emerging characteristics of schools classified as urban, suburban, and rural are shown to play a large role in the school effectiveness and improvement processes described in this paper. Extensive tables of school pair comparisons and context differences are included. (25 references) (Author/MLH)

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Case Histories from a Longitudinal Study of School Effects

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Abstract

This paper presents recently completed case histories of three pairs of schools (one urban pair, one suburban pair, one rural pair) that have been observed over a seven year period of time during the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study, Phases III and IV (LSES-III and -IV). These pairs of schools were studied extensively in 1984-85 (LSES-III) and again in 1989-90 (LSES-IV). Four distinct types of schools will be described: stable/more effective (2 schools), improving (2 schools), stable/less effective (1 school), and declining (1 school).

It will be argued that historical case studies constitute the best methodology for exploring and understanding the stability of school effects over time. Emerging characteristics of schools classified as urban, suburban, and rural will be presented. These characteristics played a large role in the school effectiveness and improvement processes described in this paper.

Case Histories from a Longitudinal Study of School Effects

Several of the methodological critiques of school effectiveness research (Good & Brophy, 1986; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rowan, Bossert, & Dwyer, 1983) indicated that instability in the effectiveness status of selected schools over time is a weakness of the research. For instance, Good & Brophy, (1986) stated, "it would be disturbing to go to the trouble and expense of identifying effective schools only to learn that these schools do not have stable effects on student achievement across consecutive years." (p. 586).

The evidence on the stability of school effects across time is contradictory, as indicated in reviews (Good & Brophy, 1986; Mandeville & Anderson, 1987). For example, Forsythe (1973) found very low correlations among the residual values from regression analyses of data from two successive graduating classes for a sample of 50 high schools. Similarly, Rowan and Denk (1982) estimated that only about 10% of schools drawn from a large sample were consistently effective or ineffective over consecutive years.

On the other hand, Weber (1971) concluded that two of four effective schools maintained their effectiveness over several years. Similarly, Rutter, et al. (1979) and Rutter (1983) reported that effective schools maintained their effectiveness over several consecutive years.

Part of the reason for this inconsistency in results is due to differences in methodologies employed: (1) studies showing stable results were more likely to utilize extensive case history data, while those finding unstable results typically utilized regression analyses on archived data; and (2) studies demonstrating unstable results looked at both effective and ineffective schools, while those investigating only effective schools found more stability across time.

The current study employed extensive case histories of both effective and ineffective schools. The need for more qualitatively oriented research in school effectiveness has been voiced elsewhere (Donmeyer, 1985; Shoemaker & Fraser, 1981). By closely examining succeeding and failing schools over time, more evidence on the stability of school effects should be attained. Additionally, the historical case study approach (e.g., Neill, 1960) allows one to study in detail the processes whereby a complex organization, such as a school, improves, declines, or stays stable over time.

Methodology

The research design for LSES-III and -IV called for a matched-pair outlier sample of 16 schools, eight designated as effective and eight as ineffective. Schools were selected on the basis of residual scores from regression analyses that predicted achievement for two years (1982-83, 1983-84) based on the socioeconomic status (SES) characteristics of students (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1988). State administered criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) were used to initially classify the schools. The research team also administered a norm-referenced test (NRT).

A variety of data sources were used to study the 16 schools in LSES-III and -IV (Teddlie, Kirby, & Stringfield, 1989). Those data sources most relevant to this paper include observations and interviews conducted at four points in time: Fall 1984, Spring 1985, Fall 1989, and Spring 1990. Each of the 16 schools was visited by a two person team for three full days during each of these periods. Altogether, the research team spent over 2000 hours in field observations, with each school being observed 24 person days. Extensive observations were conducted in classrooms using low- and high-inference protocols. Interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, and support personnel. Field

notes were collected on observations in the hallways, playgrounds, cafeterias, and other school areas.

Information from these interviews, observations, field notes, and other data sources were combined to produce extensive case studies for each of the schools. Audiotapes containing the impressions of observers regarding each school were made both in the field and at the end of data gathering.

Results

As a backdrop to the current study, information on the results from LSES-III will be briefly summarized. Observers, even though they were participating in a double blind study, were able to correctly identify the effective and ineffective schools in 1984-85 (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1991). While the 16 schools generally maintained their effectiveness status in LSES-III, there was evidence of naturally occurring school improvement in four of the ineffective schools (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1990). Differences between naturally occurring school improvement and externally developed innovations were delineated in seven areas (Huberman & Miles, 1984): setting, motives and attitudes toward adoption, initial perception and assessments, early implementation, assistance, transformation, and change in user practice.

Results from recently completed analyses of LSES-IV data sources indicate that in 1989-90 four of the schools were stable/more effective, four were stable/less effective, five were improving, and three were declining schools (Teddlie & Stringfield, in press). Thus, half of the schools maintained their effectiveness status over the seven year period of the study, but there was also evidence for considerable change over time. Table 1 summarizes information from eight data files about the 16 LSES-III and -IV schools.

This paper will provide details about the processes involved in stability and change at three pairs of schools: one urban, one suburban, and one rural pair. For the urban pair (where there was an improving and a declining school), twenty themes contrasting the improving school in LSES-IV as opposed to LSES-III will be emphasized. For the suburban pair (where there was a stable/more

effective and a stable/less effective school), a taxonomy of twenty dimensions that consistently distinguished the schools will be discussed. For the rural pair (where there was a stable effective and an improving school), issues regarding maintaining and enhancing school effectiveness in a resource poor environment will be presented. In the following case studies, comments will concentrate on LSES-IV observations for the sake of saving space in this paper. References will be made back to LSES-III throughout the case studies.

A Longitudinal Study of a Pair of Urban Schools

Herbert Hoover Elementary, 1989-90
(Ineffective school in LSES-III, improving in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

Hoover's physical plant and student characteristics had changed little since 1984-85. The student body was still 100% African American and drawn from nearby public housing projects. The school itself had been restructured and now consisted of grades K-6. Rezoning had turned Hoover into more of a neighborhood school and had also drastically reduced the average classroom size from 30 or more per class to the low 20s five years later.

The new principal, Mr. Jameson, who had come to the school three years earlier, contended that rezoning had destroyed the school's PTA. Most students who now attended Hoover came from single parent households, he said, adding that many parents had very negative attitudes toward schooling. In addition to the new principal, there had been a 47% turnover in the instructional staff accompanied by much more effective teaching in the classrooms. Hoover teachers now actually outscored their positive matched school on all dimensions of effective teaching. The total time-on-task had gone up dramatically from 52% in 1984-85 to 85% in 1989-90. Table 1 contains a summary of Hoover on various dimensions (historically ineffective school in Pair 4). These changes in instructional effectiveness were reflected in student achievement. Hoover actually outscored its positive matched school on the 1989-90 CRTs and the spring 1990 NRT.

The Principal

Herbert Hoover was a radically different school than it had been five years earlier. Observers were immediately aware of a greater adherence to the school schedule and of better performance by teachers. While the previous principal, Mr. Watson, had seemed oblivious to Hoover's problems, Mr. Jameson could recite a litany of the difficulties he had encountered. Most of the problems he cited were mirrored by the research team's findings in 1984-85: poor adherence to an ill-defined school schedule, excessive use of the lounge, low time-on-task, low student achievement, underlying racial tension among faculty members, and so forth.

Mr. Jameson considered his predecessor too accepting of bad teachers, saying that Watson had accepted more than his share during the annual "dance of the lemons" (Bridges, 1986). Mr. Jameson developed a reputation for toughness; four teachers and the secretary retired soon after he came. He had ample opportunity to rebuild the faculty since nine teachers resigned over the next three years.

Mr. Jameson had institutionalized many changes since taking over Hoover. He made it clear that he had received no forewarning from the central office of the schools' problems, nor had he been asked to "straighten out the school." His work at Hoover was an excellent example of "naturally occurring school improvement" (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1990).

In order to achieve his goals, Mr. Jameson circulated memos during his second semester as principal, notifying his staff of changes in the school's schedule/procedures, and enforced these amended rules the very next semester. Even as Mr. Jameson cracked down on his faculty, he tried to buffer the teachers from external pressures -- a technique described as characteristic of effective principals in lower SES schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Teddlie Stringfield, Wimpelberg, & Kirby, 1989). He controlled all parental access to classrooms, requiring that parents first meet with him and be given a hall pass.

Despite his efforts on their behalf, Mr. Jameson realized that his faculty had some serious attitude problems. One particularly rebellious clique of teacher aides at the kindergarten level had

succeeded in demoralizing and running off a number of teachers. Mr. Jameson broke up this clique by reassigning some of them to different grades and then enacting rules designed to keep them physically segregated.

The most institutional of Jameson's innovations was the promulgation of an administrative handbook; bound with a red cover, it soon became known as "the redbook." The "redbook" covered all aspects of Hoover school life and had three ring binders allowing the insertion of new material. For example, the section on operation/administration included descriptions of the district philosophy, the superintendent's goals and objectives, and the philosophy at Hoover.

Discipline had improved greatly since our 1984-85 visit, again to due Mr. Jameson's innovations. While the district had a three-step student disciplinary process culminating in suspension, Mr. Jameson installed a five-step process designed to keep the child in school as long as possible. After the student had been given corporal punishment, the parent/guardian was summoned for a conference. This conference often led to resolution of the problem. Mr. Jameson's approach was working since students were now seldom suspended.

Mr. Jameson was enthusiastic about a new statewide teacher evaluation system that was being piloted. Though he had been aware of general problems with instructional delivery, he confessed to having had difficulty pinpointing his teachers' specific problems. With the new system Mr. Jameson determined that his teachers were weak in questioning skills. He consequently spent time researching how best to question students and how to use wait time properly, and was preparing a faculty in-service on what he had learned. His response to the faculty's weaknesses is an excellent example of the type of instructional leadership behavior associated with effective, lower SES schools, which often have a younger and less well-prepared faculty.

Teachers

When Mr. Jameson took over as principal, he held separate faculty meetings by grade level and subject area. These meetings enabled him to identify teachers who were more participatory and

who might make good grade-level lead teachers. The designation of lead teachers was an important part school's reorganization, since those individuals handled most communications between principal/staff.

None of the three third grade teachers from LSES-III were still at the school. Of their replacements, two were experienced teachers whom Jameson had recruited and the third was a beginning teacher. The most experienced teacher, Ms. Dawson, had been recruited by Mr. Jameson and was designated lead teacher for third grade. Though her interaction style with students was old-fashioned, she had a high energy level that invigorated the classroom. Ms. Dawson was a resource person not only for her grade level, but for math instruction schoolwide. The beginning teacher, Ms. Warren, was often seen consulting with Ms. Dawson.

The next most experienced teacher, Ms. Bell, was designated the third grade reading instructor. She had some unusual teaching techniques. One team member observed Ms. Bell leading something akin to a "Simon Says, what am I?" lesson in which students pulled items out of a bag and described them, thus illustrating adjective use. As the observer noted, this simple task "was a stretch for many students, who found it difficult to describe their belongings precisely. They got much better as the lesson progressed."

The novice third grade teacher, Ms. Warren, was nervous and tentative. Her transitions took too long and sometimes her answers to questions were wrong. On the other hand, she had good rapport with students and often injected humor into lessons. With Ms. Dawson's technical assistance, she had the potential to become a good instructor.

Life in the School

Mr. Jameson had made many changes at the school level: enforcing the school schedule, making the lounge off-limits except during designated times, removing the television and phone from the lounge, instituting consistent policies through the "redbook," and protecting teacher time by restricting parental access and by shifting paperwork to the office. He had worked diligently with his

special education teacher to devise a schedule that maximized classroom time. Hence, the tremendous amount of time wasted in transition in 1984-85 was now a thing of the past.

Classroom time was also now better spent and part of the improvement was attributable to initiatives taken by Mr. Jameson and his staff. For example, five years earlier, all students studied together in whole class activities. The advent of departmentalization had made ability grouping feasible, greatly contributing to classroom efficiency. Low time-on-task had been tolerated under the previous principal, who was oblivious to teachers' shortcomings. Mr. Jameson knew where his weaker teachers were and had initiated personalized in-services to correct each teacher's problems.

The student experience at Hoover was much more positive in 1989-90 than it had five years earlier. The school was more student-oriented, and the children seemed less starved for attention. While life at the school was more structured now, this was more reassuring to the children than the chaos that had previously existed.

Lyndon B. Johnson Elementary School, 1989-90
(Effective in LSES-III, declining in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

Lyndon B. Johnson looked very much the same in 1989-90 as it had five years earlier. The student body numbered roughly 650 and, with the exception of fewer than five white students, was entirely African American. This was very similar to the makeup of the school in 1984-85 (see historically effective school in Pair 4 on Table 1).

The sheer size and layout of the facility worked against the creation of a sense of intimacy so tangible in many effective elementary schools. Nonetheless, the faculty and staff were still working to create a pleasant environment for the children; most of the rooms were well decorated and there were numerous plants throughout the building.

The principal, Mr. Thompson, characterized Johnson as a neighborhood school in LSES-III

and that appellation still rang true. The vast majority of students still walked to and from two nearby housing projects. The school had, in fact, become the focal community point of the two projects. The sense of community was particularly evident on Fridays, when students and staff wore t-shirts or sweatshirts emblazoned with the school mascot. Money from PTO fundraisers also flowed back into the community by way of assistance to needy students. The principal talked fondly of a community dance that had recently been held in the auditorium.

While Mr. Thompson had been successful in establishing Johnson as a community school, data on student achievement and teaching behavior had deteriorated from five years ago. The staff had remained relatively stable, with 66% of the teaching faculty retained from LSES-III. On the teaching effectiveness measures, however, Johnson teachers now scored lower than those at Hoover. Even though this was the case, the rate of interactive time-on-task at Johnson had increased from LSES-III to -IV. Differences between Johnson and Hoover on the teaching dimensions in LSES-IV were largely due to great improvement at Hoover.

Johnson was also outscored by Hoover on the CRT and NRT in LSES-IV. This was especially apparent on the CRT, where Johnson students had poor performance in 1989-90 compared to their earlier scores.

Principal

Mr. Thompson was very much the central figure at Johnson, though observers felt he was less enthusiastic than five years earlier. Perhaps he was less demonstrative a booster because he had realized his goal of making Johnson "the best kind of neighborhood school." His sense of commitment was still there -- he still talked about "making Johnson an integral part of the community" -- even though he had already succeeded on that count. His focus had shifted even more from school to community: he sounded more like a community activist than an instructional leader.

Thompson was proud of the political clout he wielded and used the community newspaper "to get the word out" when problems emerged. When he wanted to improve the library, he persuaded the

paper to run articles about fixing it. He planted a rose garden in memory of students who had died in a fire, and said the garden had since become an important community symbol.

Thompson was much less clear about the organizational and instructional changes that had been made at Johnson during his tenure. Several procedural improvements had been made; according to faculty members, Thompson was more successful at acquiring materials and supplies than his predecessor. Mr. Thompson's curriculum changes were limited to keeping his staff in step with statewide guidelines. To ensure this he required that they periodically submit lesson plans. While he claimed to spot check classrooms regularly, we seldom saw him do so. Though he had hired a curriculum coordinator, she had not made her presence felt.

Mr. Thompson seemed reluctant to put his stamp on the instructional process. He preferred leaving teaching to teachers, while he "rallied the troops" through motivational speeches and community projects. Thompson's preference for quick-fix solutions over long-term strategies was evident in his hiring philosophy. Johnson had experienced a recent spate of resignations as teachers either retired or were lured away by out-of-state districts. In keeping with his philosophy to select the most experienced teachers, he hired five teachers out of retirement. While this hiring philosophy addressed the school's immediate teacher shortage, it was no way to build a long-term instructional staff.

Another example of the principal's failure to impact the instructional process was his decision against adopting a voluntary departmentalization program. Had he gone to departmentalization, Thompson would have had to evaluate the instructional strengths of his faculty. Even had he allowed self selection, he still would have had to gather sufficient information to concur their self selection. He did neither, opting instead for the status quo.

Once that decision was made, he did little to improve even the status quo. The 1989-90 faculty demonstrated the same wide variance in instructional skills that were observed in 1984-85. Such variance called for an active in-service program through which the skills of weaker teachers

could be upgraded. When asked to discuss in-service opportunities at Johnson, Thompson merely indicated that the central office offered an in-service program and that he had designated teachers level to coordinate faculty participation. No individualized in-service programs were available at Johnson.

Teachers

The great variance in teacher ability was apparent from researchers' observations. One observer noted that some teachers "really seemed to like teaching and used a variety of explanations in class." In contrast to these teachers (who used manipulatives in math/science and had several class assigned projects), other teachers were described as "just there."

One observer noted that Johnson had no single schoolwide climate, but rather "separate climates for each grade level." The various grade levels, which typically consisted of four classes, operated autonomously according to their own schedules. At some grade levels, faculties used this autonomy to advantage, creating "closely knit families" of teachers who worked together to establish their own positive climates. At other grade levels (third grade, for example) a much less positive climate was engendered.

The overall experience level of the third grade teachers may have contributed to their inability to pull together and pursue common goals. The four teachers, all of whom had taught more than 15 years in the third grade, averaged 56 years in age. Two, Ms. Sims and Ms. Lagrange, had been at Johnson many years; the others, Ms. Evans and Ms. Jones, had moved to the third grade level since 1984-85. Given the teachers' experience level and the self-contained nature of the classes, there was probably less sharing of teaching strategies and philosophies than might have been the case with younger teachers operating with less autonomy.

Ms. Sims had been described as the best third grade teacher in 1984-85. Five years later, her classroom was still pleasant and her time-on-task rating good, but she wasn't nearly as warm toward the students as before. Her classroom dialogue was peppered with admonitions to "be quiet and think." During one classroom period, she spent so much time writing on the blackboard that she had

little time for interactive teaching.

Ms. Lagrange was as colorful and matriarchal as before, calling her students "little girl" and "little brother." She was at times inappropriate and insensitive in her student interactions. During one reading period, she told a boy, "Now, Renaldo, I know you have a speech defect, but go ahead and read anyway." While more in-service was needed at Johnson, the observers were uncertain whether such training would have any influence on Ms. Lagrange, given her age, and style.

In contrast to Ms. Lagrange, one of the newer teachers, Ms. Evans, was described by one observer as "a bright, energetic woman who works hard at her students' math lessons, yet also laughs at herself and with her kids." Her classes were characterized by frequent student/teacher interaction and positive reinforcement.

The last third grade teacher, Ms. Jones, had been brought out of retirement after teaching several semesters for free. Her room was sparsely decorated and she spent much time turned away from her class writing on the board. On the other hand, she was a firm believer in positive reinforcement, such as encouraging her students to applaud each other for giving correct answers.

The third grade deficiencies were not shared schoolwide, as excellent teaching and camaraderie were the norm at some other grade levels, most notably kindergarten and first grade. One teacher was a particular standout characterized by several observers as the best kindergarten teacher they had seen during the LSES. Her students' eyes were turned to her through extended discussions in which she led them through lessons with a series of questions.

Life in the School

Life in the school reflected the same uneven atmosphere that characterized classrooms. Transitions still went quickly with few incidents, largely because individual grades operated according to such varied schedules that large student groups were seldom in simultaneous motion.

Johnson Elementary was a focal point for the local African American community and was the site of frequent events. Teacher appreciation day drew 90 mothers to the school to help teach lessons,

underscoring the high level of parent participation schoolwide. Though parental involvement was highly valued, the teachers did not seem particularly student-oriented. One particularly menacing index of this was the omnipresent paddle. Each teacher had a paddle and brandished it throughout the day. Though Mr. Thompson had stressed discipline when he took over Johnson, the LSES-III observers believed he would ease off once order was restored. Five years later, they found discipline more harsh than at the beginning of his tenure and were convinced that too much force was being used.

In contrast to these problems was the library experience at Johnson. Five years earlier, the library renovation had symbolized the school's rebirth under Mr. Thompson. The LSES-IV observation team felt that the library was still the most attractive and best run library they had seen during LSES. Students were allowed constant access to the facility. Students were encouraged to work on research projects during their last class period and were seen freely walking to and from the library to do so.

If Mr. Thompson had devoted as much of his attention to classroom instruction as he had to the library, positive academic change could have been institutionalized. Instead, the school seemed a good example of what Rosenholtz (1989) called a "stuck school" -- one that is not moving and changing positively. Almost all of Thompson's initiatives at Johnson had been at the school level -- improving the school climate, adding positive symbols, improving the library, involving the community, bringing in motivational speakers, enhancing the facility, etc. Innovation had not occurred at the classroom; therefore, school progress had been only partially institutionalized.

Comparisons Between Hoover and Johnson Over Time

Comparisons between Hoover and Johnson were dramatic: during LSES-III Johnson was superior to Hoover on all indices; at the time of LSES-IV Hoover tied or surpassed Johnson on every indicator of teacher/school effectiveness. Since the schools served the same student bodies during both phases of the study, the changes were attributable to school leadership and faculty.

Entrophic process were at work at Johnson during LSES-IV. Entrophy occurs at effective schools when successful processes fall apart due to a failure to keep them moving (Slater & Teddlie, 1990). In the case of Truman, this was a function of several factors.

1. Too much energy was expended on community-oriented processes. Thompson was devoting too much time externally and not enough internally.
2. There was no meaningful monitoring and evaluation of classrooms.
3. There was no individualized in-service program to remediate weaknesses of faculty members.
4. The principal used inappropriate hiring strategies, opting for older teachers instead of younger ones, who could devote more years of service to the school.
5. The curriculum coordinator failed to assume the academic leadership role.
6. Johnson was composed of several distinct grade level climates, rather than one overall school climate.

At Hoover a dynamic new principal was intuitively able to demonstrate the strong instructional leader role described by Edmonds (1979a,b). This type leadership role is appropriate for lower-SES schools with a young faculty, both characteristic of Hoover. A summary of the changes at Hoover between LSES-III and IV is found in Table 2. The new principal was site oriented, staying at the school throughout the day, monitoring the facility and individual classrooms. Mr. Jameson dramatically switched the school's goals toward academics, with a de-emphasis on other social services.

A Longitudinal Study of a Pair of Suburban Schools

Calvin Coolidge Elementary, 1989-90 (Ineffective in LSES-III, stable in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

The neighborhood surrounding Coolidge Elementary had experienced an economic downturn

since 1984-85. The percentage of lower SES families had grown — a trend was reflected in the student body make-up. About 80% of the students were African American as opposed to 45% five years before. About 70% of all students participated in the free/reduced lunch programs.

The school looked better than it had previously, thanks to a new principal, Ms. Lambert, who set a priority on keeping the school attractive. Appearances aside, the facility had its shortcomings, most notably portable walls dividing classrooms. The school had recently come under a restructure project initiated by the district to increase site-based management. The restructure called for the departmentalization of instruction, which meant that students were required to switch classes often. Because some same-grade classrooms were contiguous, the divider walls were constantly being opened and closed as students shuffled back and forth. Teacher conversations decreased valuable class time even more as the faculty tried to keep track of students and their assignments.

Student performance and classroom teaching behavior were as dismal as they had been in 1984-85, in spite of a change in principal and a 47% turnover in instructional staff (see pair 1 historically ineffective school in Table 1). Teachers again scored well below the positive matched school on all effectiveness dimensions. While interactive and total time-on-task had improved from five years before, these indices were still well below those attained by the effective school in Pair 1. Additionally, Coolidge scored below its matched pair on the CRTs and NRTs.

Principal

Ms. Lambert had been principal for two years, having replaced Ms. Sanders, who was promoted to the central office. She resembled her predecessor in both physical characteristics and in their shared flair for public relations. The combination auditorium/recreation room now boasted a banner emblazoned with the names of eight school sponsors.

Ms. Lambert had an assertive interaction style with teachers, parents, and students, as contrasted with her predecessor's more easygoing style. A former teacher who considered herself a reading specialist, Ms. Lambert did not hesitate to offer teachers what she considered constructive

criticism. Many teachers did not appreciate the principal's apparent attitude of superiority when giving advice.

The janitor had worked for both principals. He contrasted them as follows: "Ms. Sanders was really laid back. On the other hand, Ms. Lambert wants everything yesterday. If she asks you to do something, she says 'You should have thought about that before I told you.'"

As with Ms. Sanders in LSES-III, Ms. Lambert portrayed the school in a positive light. However, she was more openly critical of some teachers. After observing for several days, one team member said she was initially impressed with Ms. Lambert's energy level, but eventually came to see her leadership as negative. The turning point, she said, was Ms. Lambert's differential treatment of teachers.

Certain teachers were her obvious favorites. One language development teacher was a clear favorite and was consulted on a variety of issues. The principal had even given this teacher the authority to conduct an important parental survey on the restructure project.

At the other end of the hallway was group of teachers with whom the principal seldom interacted. Ms. Lambert confided that these teachers were intimidated by her and did not want her to observe their classes. When she made morning rounds, she invariably peeked in these rooms, but did not enter. An observer suggested that "mutual intimidation" was going on since the principal apparently stayed out of the classrooms by mutual consent.

On another occasion Ms. Lambert angrily canceled a faculty meeting because some teachers had scheduled medical appointments at that time. She told the observer, "I tore into them and told them I didn't appreciate their scheduling appointments on faculty meeting days — that we would have meetings when everyone could attend, regardless of other meetings." The teachers hadn't talked to her since then, she confided, adding that she "didn't care."

Teachers

The faculty and staff at Coolidge seemed splintered into cliques apparently shaped by relations

with and allegiances to the principal. So many staff members were preoccupied with their own relationships that the school's overall atmosphere seemed much more staff than student-oriented. Though good teaching could be found in some classrooms, the overall level of instruction at Coolidge in 1989 was as low as it had been previously.

The trend was apparent at the third grade, which had two new teachers since 1984-85. One teacher, Ms. Harrell, was nearing retirement and preferred to sit in one spot from which she would address the class in tones laced with criticism and sarcasm. It appeared that Ms. Harrell had been a good teacher at some point, but had long since "burned out." She indicated that she would retire the next year and planned to move her son from Coolidge because she didn't want the child's education "wasted in a school like this." She projected a sense of academic futility — a belief that nothing could be done to improve Coolidge.

The other third grade teacher, a younger woman named Ms. Bain, was making a better effort. She was one of Ms. Lambert's favorites and was good at math instruction. However, her reading lessons appeared fragmented — 20 minutes of reading, then recess, then 20 minutes of reading. When asked why she had scheduled the lesson around recess, Ms. Bain replied, "You know, our enhancement is math, so something else has to give. In our school, it's reading."

At other grades, highly skilled and much less competent teachers taught side-by-side. Two kindergarten teachers taught in contiguous rooms — one, an experienced instructor in her 40s, was energetic and adept at coordinating classroom activities. Her colleague, a woman in her early 20s, struggled simply to maintain classroom control. Observers wondered, "Why didn't the other instructor help her young colleague cope with simple managerial issues?" The quality of instruction was also uneven at other grades. For example, one male teacher ran his fifth grade class like a boot camp, crisply addressing his students as "Mr.," "Miss," and "Sir." One observer sat through an entire recess before realizing the class was not in session. The teacher, a stern disciplinarian, had kept 90% of the students in for various reasons.

The observers found themselves asking, "Where is the principal, and how can she allow this to continue?" Whatever good instruction was taking place seemed a function of the individual teacher's native ability and determination. The range of teaching behaviors was large, and the principal was either unwilling or incapable of helping those at the lower end of the scale.

Life in the School

The atmosphere of disjointedness and inappropriateness at Coolidge was best exemplified by the curious status of the janitor, who had assumed duties and responsibilities far beyond those of custodial staff. The janitor could be seen in the office four to five times per day, answering the telephone and calling parents to pick up sick children. Once he asked the secretary to teach him to use the computer so he could access student files. When asked what he did, he said, "Well, my title is janitor, but I am better known as assistant principal, assistant secretary, assistant counselor, and at times, disciplinarian." The principal not only tolerated but seemed to encourage this unusual role.

One of the more pervasive characteristics at Coolidge was the waste of "school time" as opposed to "class time." School time is spent under the control of administrative policy and encompasses the processes whereby classroom time is organized. The administration tolerated such inefficiencies as scheduling reading periods before and after recess at a loss of time-on-task. Excessive time was also lost, shuttling students in and out of class for special activities.

The principal's frequent use of the intercom, cut further into class time. When the school pictures came in, the principal used the intercom in the middle of a class to ask each teacher to send a student to the office. Ms. Lambert also used the intercom to castigate teachers in front of students and colleagues. She once used the intercom to criticize individual teachers for allowing their students to run during a fire drill.

Despite the principal's heavyhanded attempts at management, discipline was largely lacking during recess. One observer watched a teacher yell at a blind student as he clung to the playground fence at the end of recess. The teacher later brought the boy to the office for discipline. Because the

principal had no paddle card for the child, she ordered him to stand with his arms extended for more than 30 minutes. When the child's arms began to hurt, he started to cry, prompting the principal to say, "Shut your mouth. I'm trying to telephone someone." A group of four to five students surrounded the child, giggling and taunting him. This incident so upset a substitute secretary that she threatened to call the school board.

John F. Kennedy Elementary School, 1989-90
(Effective in LSES-III, stable in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

Kennedy, which was located down the street from Coolidge, had undergone the same kind of student SES changes that had occurred at Coolidge. The student body was now approximately 20% white, and the overall SES of the students' parents had declined. While a few teachers were concerned about these changes, overall instruction and discipline were very similar to what we had seen before.

The secretary, principal, and teachers were very friendly, and showed an interest in the observers' careers and families. One observer who spent several days at the school indicated that, "The faculty here seemed genuinely interested in what was going on in my life." The teachers' lounge was hospitable, with such "homey" touches as snacks set out by cafeteria workers. The conversation in the lounge was often student-centered. A restructure program had also recently been imposed by the district at Kennedy. It emphasized environmental science and mandated the formation of a school redesign committee.

Data on student achievement and teacher effectiveness were very similar to what was reported five years ago. Despite a changing student body, Kennedy was maintaining a high level of effectiveness. Kennedy's teachers' scores on the measures of teaching effectiveness were, again, much higher than at Coolidge, and were among the best in the study during 1989-90 (see historically

effective school 1 in pair 1 on Table 1). The rate of interactive time-on-task in LSES-IV was 57% and total time-on-task was 71%.

Similarly, the Kennedy scores on the CRT were well above Coolidge's on all tests across the two-year (1988-90) period. These trends were also found on the NRT, where Kennedy students scored above Coolidge students. The faculty exhibited great stability with 72 percent of the 1984-85 instructional personnel still on staff in 1989-90.

Principal

Ms. Davis was still principal at Kennedy, as she had been in LSES-III, and her presence contributed to the sense of continuity at the school despite the change in student body. Continuity was a defining quality at Kennedy, while Coolidge seemed in a protracted state of flux. Ms. Davis was much the same as before, projecting a soft exterior, yet defending her school against any threats. She saw the district restructuring project as another bureaucratic infringement, yet she made the necessary changes to keep the school in compliance with district guidelines.

The discipline at Roosevelt was still excellent, though Ms. Davis seldom used the paddle "because then she had nothing left to back up her control." After a student had two paddlings, she and the counselor would call in the school psychologist to discuss behavior modification for the student, again emphasizing positive rather than negative reinforcement. The administration at Kennedy recognized the need for professional external help with certain students and weren't embarrassed to use it.

Ms. Davis still served as a facilitator where instructional matters were concerned, consulting with her faculty and allowing them to take the lead in developing strategies. We never heard her tell any teacher that "this is the way to do it." When a problem was identified, she would call the teacher to her office and say, "I believe I'm seeing such-and-such a behavior in your class. Is this what I'm seeing?" She indicated that most teachers would acknowledge the problem and together, they would develop an improvement strategy.

Teachers

The Kennedy teachers constituted a very cohesive faculty, with an average tenure of 17.5 years. The teachers believed that Kennedy had been and would continue to be one of the best schools in the district in which to teach. One African American teacher summarized this attitude as follows: "There's no bickering and talking about teachers here like there has been at some other schools I've taught. Ms. Davis wouldn't allow that kind of stuff to go on at Kennedy."

The counselor appeared to be the most in tune with Ms. Davis' goals. She served as the informal assistant principal and occupied an office next door to the principal's. This informal administrative structure was well accepted and quite appropriate, unlike the informal structure at Coolidge where the janitor assumed the role of second in command.

Life in the third grade remained stable, as the three teachers continued their careers at Kennedy. Among the three, they now had more than 60 years of teaching experience. Even though the SES of their students had declined, the scores on the NRT remained as high as before. The teachers had developed among themselves a method for minimizing classroom disruptions associated with the mandated departmentalization of the restructuring project. Instead of having students move from classroom to classroom as the subject areas changed, the teachers moved themselves. This almost totally eliminated time lost in transitions from one class to another. This method is an example of the instructional leadership of the Kennedy faculty, which had been nurtured by Ms. Davis. It also illustrates their child-centered orientation, as opposed to an adult-centered mentality that would have preferred having the teachers stay in their own classrooms.

Two beginning teachers seemed to fit in well at Kennedy. Ms. Davis indicated that she liked getting new teachers "because she could mold them easier than veteran ones." She noted that one of her new teachers had discipline problems because her college internship had been with a "very relaxed" mentor. Ms. Davis said the young teacher had potential, but that her students needed more

structure. After talking with her, she had assigned an older teacher with excellent managerial skills to work with her.

Life in the School

There was a great emphasis at Kennedy on protecting classroom time. An example of this guarding of academic time concerned the use of the intercom. The only times one heard the intercom was at the beginning of the school day and ten minutes before the end of the school day. Very little time was lost at Kennedy in going to recess or lunch. Observers estimated that Kennedy lost about one-half the time that Coolidge lost in transitions.

Ms. Davis felt that the strongest aspect of Kennedy was its academic program, and she resisted as much as possible any external restriction on it. While she accommodated the district imposed environmental science enhancement, she made the minimum changes required in her curriculum. At Kennedy, there was a strong sense of school control over academic matters.

Ms. Davis' interactions with students were very positive. Observers indicated in their field notes that students would come to the principal's door, which was always open, to say hello. She had a student council and the officers helped her get the school newsletter out and run the candy sale at lunch. Students believed they were an important part of the life at Kennedy.

Faculty cohesiveness was indicated by two LSES-IV incidents. Our research included gathering pilot test data on a controversial, statewide teacher evaluation instrument. The only teachers to be evaluated on this instrument were the three third grade teachers, who to that point had been very cooperative. These teachers decided that they did not want to participate in what they called "a dog and pony show" and asked the principal to excuse them from this aspect of the study. Ms. Davis called us and apologized for the teachers' stance, but backed them up saying it was within their rights to refuse to participate. This was the only time in the ten-year history of LSES that anyone had refused to cooperate in any aspect of the study! We were impressed with the staff solidarity and with the value that Ms. Davis placed on her teachers' opinions.

An even more dramatic demonstration of the faculty's cohesiveness occurred late in the spring. A district restructure audit team came to the school, conducted a very brief tour, and wrote a negative report on the school. The team was particularly critical of the school's academic program. The faculty was initially upset by the report, but their disappointment quickly turned to anger and then concerted action. A special faculty committee was selected and composed a strong rebuttal to the audit team's report. The principal called the LSES director asking for a support letter, sent a faculty member to help the researcher compose the letter, and then sent another staff member to pick it up. The faculty put together an impressive packet of materials describing the school's programs and criticizing point by point the audit report, noting the "unconventional manner in which the audit team had conducted its business." This incident clearly demonstrated the faculty's pride in Kennedy Elementary.

Comparisons Between Coolidge and Kennedy Over Time

Coolidge and Kennedy Elementary Schools are the clearest examples in LSES of a pair of matched schools that have maintained their relative status over time. These suburban schools experienced similar shifts in student characteristics, yet one maintained a highly effective delivery of educational services while the other continued to languish.

As suburban schools serving working class lower middle-SES students, it was instructive to observe the principals' leadership roles. The Kennedy principal exemplified the positive managerial style associated with effective middle-SES schools (Teddlie, et. al, 1989). She saw herself as a manager of a strong instructional staff, an individual who shared academic leadership with her faculty and shielded them from distractions. The two Coolidge leaders never played this role. The first was unengaged with the faculty and didn't seem to recognize the school's academic problems; the second tried to emulate the strong, assertive leadership style so successful in lower-SES schools, yet her harshly critical and uneven treatment of the faculty and students undermined her success.

Major differences between the two schools in terms of school climate, teacher behavior, and

student characteristics are summarized in Table 3. The differences in leadership by the principal (Point 1, Table 3) have just been discussed, but these differences are further related to Points 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The informal organizational structure at Kennedy involved shared leadership at the top between the principal and counselor, with a great deal of faculty input. All teachers perceived this organizational structure as appropriate for their school.

At Calvin Coolidge Elementary, on the other hand, the informal organizational structure was very inappropriate, with a janitor taking over responsibilities. This was partially due to the fact that the principal had not established a functional leadership team with the counselor or with a significant proportion of the faculty. Given the lack of a consistent academic vision at Coolidge, the principal had readily accepted a district-imposed enhancement program. Academic time was lost, accommodating to the district imperative.

Points 7 through 15 relate to faculty matters at both the school and classroom levels. The Kennedy faculty was marked by great stability and cohesiveness. This faculty was proud of its academic programs, for which it felt ownership, and was resistant to imposed change or district criticism that it did not believe was justified. This independent faculty epitomizes that described in effective, middle-SES schools.

At Coolidge, on the other hand, there was open bickering among faculty members, and the staff seemed divided among those loyal to or critical of the principal. While the principal tried to improve classroom level performance through demonstrations, her attitude "turned off" teachers. There was moderately high staff turnover and great variance among classrooms in time-on-task and instructional quality.

Points 16 through 20 concern differences at the school level. Kennedy students were directly involved in school level activities such as fund raisers and hallway monitoring. There were many faculty comments about doing "what is good for the students." The faculty continued to communicate high expectations to students despite of changing demographics.

Discipline was extremely weak at Coolidge, as exemplified by the chaotic loading of buses. This occurred in spite of the use of corporal punishment at the school level and sarcasm at the classroom level. Most decisions at this persistently ineffective school had to do with what was good for adults, or a subgroup of adults, rather than for children.

A Longitudinal Study of a Pair of Rural Schools

Harry Truman Elementary, 1989-90 (Effective school in LSES-III, stable in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

In the five years since LSES-III, the trek required to reach Truman had not shortened. Having had no industry, the Truman community had lost none, but neither had any new industry moved into the community. Agriculture continued to dominate the surrounding countryside, but that economy remained highly mechanized. The school had not received a new coat of paint, and the walls, still graffiti free and clean, now had a dingy look. The families served by Truman elementary remained over 95% African American. The principal stated that a total of two students in the school did not receive free or reduced lunch.

Truman's students were continuing to do well on both the CRT and NRT (see historically effective school in Pair 5 on Table 1). This third grade achievement was being maintained under circumstances which were sub-optimal. Several changes had occurred at Truman since LSES-III. As a result of district consolidation efforts, the school had lost its 7th and 8th grades and its football team. The school had been able to retain its principal and 57% of its faculty over the five years since LSES-III. A new special education teacher had proven inadequate, and was counseled out of education. New fourth and sixth grade teachers were still learning their craft, but showing promise.

The Principal

Mr. Smith remained the principal at Truman. Given retirements and other faculty moves, he had now hired all but two of the teachers. His easy-going but firm philosophy of administration

remained unchanged, as did his school's standing on the state mandated achievement tests. Mr. Smith saw the loss of the 7th and 8th grades, and in particular the loss of the football team, as the only significant change in Truman over the five years.

The Teachers

The kindergarten teacher had been at Truman for 25 years and was in her final year before retirement. The observers repeatedly noted that she worked as if she had one foot out the door. The first grade teacher, an African American female, had been the second grade teacher five years earlier. When the former first grade teacher had temporarily moved from the building, she had asked to be transferred to first grade. She was an energetic teacher, highly interactive. Her students enjoyed responding to her energy and her questions.

The second grade teacher, a middle-aged white male, had been the first grade teacher five years earlier. A year earlier he had decided to leave Truman. Within a few weeks, and before a permanent replacement had been identified, he concluded he had made a mistake, and asked for his old job back. He described himself as having "very nearly made the biggest mistake of my life." This gentleman had an unusually effective, non-punative control over his students. He brought topics and materials from the world outside the classroom to his students, and they clearly responded with interest and respect. The second grade teacher had his students keep journals, and all students spent at least 15 minutes each day reading from library books. Students' average time on task during academic periods was very high in second grade.

The third grade situation at Truman was anomalous during the LSES-IV. The week before fall observations began, the African American female who had been the Truman third grade teacher for over 15 years had been struck by a car and had several broken bones. She entered into an extensive, lengthy rehabilitation program. She was replaced initially by a substitute teacher and later by a retired teacher. The retired teacher relied on ditto sheets and the teachers' editions of texts. The principal had intervened by bringing the skilled, energetic Chapter 1 teacher into this classroom during reading

and math periods. The result was minimal loss of core academic time.

The fourth grade teacher, while technically a "new" teacher, was a women in her forties who had been an aide at Truman during LSES-III. She was a no-nonsense person who came to class prepared, and who enjoyed challenging her students to think through questions. In the judgement of the observers, her primary limitation was that she was never seen "walking the second mile" in her preparations or during active teaching times. She would repeatedly end her formal presentations and simply tell her class to read the following several pages silently.

The fifth grade teacher who had been the strongest teacher in 1985 remained an energized, thoughtful and demanding professional. As an introduction to one assignment, she distributed mixed fruit to her students. Each student was to feel, smell, and then taste a fruit. They were then to write about the messages coming into their minds through their senses. Every student responded energetically.

The new sixth grade teacher had just graduated from college. Teaching a cohort that the principal regarded as "a hand full," she was severely challenged. By Christmas it was clear that the sixth graders were falling behind in reading. His solution had two parts. The first was to have his fifth grade teacher provide reading instruction to both fifth and sixth grade and have the sixth grade teacher teach math to both groups. Second, he continued to seek curricular and instructional support for the teacher.

These simple interventions provided the rambunctious sixth graders with reading instruction from a person they already knew to be excellent and firm. The students quickly began catching up. It also provided the first year teacher with a new experience in one subject in a new class. At year end it was clear that the teacher had been offered an opportunity to develop professional skills in a way that minimized costs to students.

Life in the School

As had been the case five years earlier, Truman, was a comfortable, safe, warm place for

children. The continuity of the principal, the relative stability of the teaching staff, and the considerable stability of the community gave a timeless air to revisiting Truman. In both the third and sixth grade situations students were at risk of falling behind. In both situations the principal quickly and quietly addressed the potential problem.

A quantitative summary of LSES-IV observations can be seen in Table 1 (pair 5 historically effective schools). Students remained on task a majority of the time, and their assigned tasks allowed opportunities for them to make academic sense of their schooling. Teachers pushed forward on the district curriculum, displaying an "average" level of interactive teaching. The principal and staff created an atmosphere which was at once academically focused and friendly. Academic time was well protected; the coordination of regular and special programs such as Chapter 1 was virtually seamless. The principal was seen regularly around school and remained highly conscious of the strengths and weaknesses of his program. The school's greatest weakness, one which local educators may have viewed as a strength, was an absence of efforts to bring ideas and curricula into the school.

Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School, 1989-90
(Ineffective in LSES-III, improving in LSES-IV)

School Context and Indicators of Effectiveness

Revisiting Roosevelt proved a rewarding yet confusing task. The confusion derived from the fact that very little of the physical environment had changed, yet Roosevelt was a different place. In 1990, the teachers assumed that virtually all students would finish their texts unlike five years earlier when most didn't. Several complained that the district curriculum coordinators sometimes "hold the teachers back" from moving as rapidly as they felt some students were capable of progressing. Teachers asked students more questions; fewer ditto sheets were seen. In many classes, time was set aside for sustained silent reading. During schoolwide reading days, students, parents, and community members read books together.

Roosevelt remained a school serving one of the least educationally advantaged communities in

the study. However, by the 1989-1990 school year, Roosevelt third graders were scoring very near their predicted achievement levels on the LSES-administered achievement test. This indicates that while Roosevelt was not becoming a "positive outlier," it was no longer a "negative outlier."

The Principal

Like his colleague from Truman, the principal at Roosevelt, Mr. Green, seemed to be one of the more stable features in LSES. He remained cordial, intelligent, and energetic. If a student discipline matter came to his office, teachers could still count on his rock-solid firmness. He continued to demand seeing students and teachers "doing their jobs." However, in many aspects Mr. Green's job had changed. Half of the Roosevelt teachers in 1985 had retired or otherwise left the school. These included several of the least energetic and imaginative staff members, more than one of whom Mr. Green had encouraged to retire early. Mr. Green had worked a variety of informal networks to find competent, energetic replacements.

The district had made several changes in the curriculum, including a lock-step movement through the curriculum and a recreational reading period. The result of the first was a uniformity of progress among teachers and students, geared toward mastery of "basic skills." The result of the second was something not seen at Roosevelt five years ago: students reading for the joy of it. Mr. Green endorsed both changes.

Working in a district with very modest resources, Roosevelt's classes had labored for years without many basic support resources such as encyclopedias. Not having a central library, Roosevelt had no single location at which students could do "research." Mr. Green had responded to this by organizing a series of community fund raising events. Across five years, this had resulted in every classroom having an encyclopedia set. At Roosevelt, this was a major achievement.

Finally, in conjunction with the teachers, Mr. Green had decided that a tracking program

would best meet student needs. In grades 2-6, Roosevelt was operating on a departmental basis. each grade had a reading teacher, a teacher who focused on math/spelling, and a third focusing on science/social studies.

The Teachers

The first and second grade teachers presented a mixed picture. Two of the first grade teachers were new and were having typical novice problems. We visited two first grade lessons which ended before the allotted time was over. The lessons had gone well, but the inexperienced teachers did not have back up activities scheduled. While neither situation had resulted from teacher sloth, both resulted in wasted time. The second grade teachers included one excellent teacher and two who were more typical. The excellent teacher used dolls, puppets, and a variety of books to interest students. She encouraged discussion and supplementary reading.

Two of the three third grade teachers had been there in LSES-III. A member of the LSES team who had observed one of these teachers in 1985 had noted that she was an energetic but not highly skilled novice. Five years later, that teacher had become seasoned. Her reading classes were marked by high rates of questioning, structuring lessons around questions, and thematic development of instructional units. Her energetic presentations, combined with her openness to students' ideas and perceptions, made her reading hours pleasures for both her students and the observers. She was one of the few teachers in the study to experiment with "whole language" instruction.

The second third grade teacher was one of the school's senior teachers. She was late middle-aged, considerably over weight, and had limited energy. Her strength was in her clarity of presentation. She was widely traveled and had an easy skill at relating personal experience to the topic of the lesson. Given that she taught social studies and science to all of the third graders, her discussions of her travels, and her open curiosity regarding science worked to her students' advantage. The third teacher taught math. She had taught in a private school for nearly twenty years, and this was her first year in the public system. She had come to the public system after working under two

consecutive principals whom she viewed as possessing only marginal skills. She was a hard-working instructor, who seemed to fit into the school easily.

The upper grades contained several of the most senior, least instructionally focused teachers. Observers sat through several upper grade lessons in which it appeared that the teachers were not prepared. Instruction was, at best, highly traditional. Teachers read directly from teachers' editions of texts, and students seemed aware that they were not being intellectually challenged. There were exceptions, but in general the earlier grades appeared to be the strength of the school.

The school had not solved all of its problems. A small number of the faculty continued to not prepare for classes or to actively instruct; local youths continued to vandalize the outdoor basketball goals; and both teachers and students might have benefitted from a revitalization of the curriculum if the district would have allowed it. However, the battle for a fundamental academic mission at Roosevelt had been won.

Comparisons Between Truman and Roosevelt During LSES-III and IV

The two schools provide several points for comparison and contrast within a rural district. The two schools were in the same very economically disadvantaged district. Both schools received little fiscal support from their district beyond salaries and basic building maintenance.

During LSES-III and IV, both schools had stable, capable, caring leaders. The Truman principal recruited intensely, evaluated teachers honestly, targeted staff development to weaker teachers, and removed less skilled teachers. The Roosevelt principal followed the same prescription. Both men were interested in the individual needs and achievements of their students and monitored teachers and students closely.

In spite of principals' efforts, both schools had a few senior staff teachers who appeared to take little interest in instruction beyond reading to students from the teachers' editions of texts and making assignments. Both principals were aware of the problems and judged that encouraging the

individuals to take early retirement was the best solution. A paradox was that by 1990 both schools were pleasant places. A senior staff member "just holding on" could continue at either school for years. In a more urban setting, the same teacher might see the environment as being too threatening, he or she might see the students as too disrespectful, or the new educational fad as requiring too much energy. In the more urban setting, the "holding-on" teacher might have already retired.

At the same time, both schools were blessed with many teachers who were of a type which has nearly vanished in urban schools. Each of these rural schools had several female teachers who went into teaching in part because they saw no other viable career options. In urban America, they might be bankers or lawyers, but in these rural settings, they had remained teachers.

On the negative side of the equation, there was not a great deal of instructional exploration going on at either school. The district had instituted a basic skills based curriculum in the mid-1980s and was not providing training or staff-development opportunities to teachers in any of the more promising, new areas of curriculum and instruction. Observers saw no cooperative learning lessons, and very little "whole language instruction."

The major historical difference between the two schools concerned achievement. At Truman, the student achievement rates would have made them a "positive outlier" for at least two years prior to LSES-III, and throughout the 1980s. Stable leadership, many stable teachers, and a solid relationship with the community continued to produce positive results. At Roosevelt, the principal who arrived in the fall of 1984 inherited a myriad of problems. He brought immediate changes to his school. The first effects of his presence had a negative tone: discipline was tight, teachers focused on getting students to work more than to think. But over the years, some teachers explored methods of keeping students on task *and* thinking. The result was classrooms which were more pleasant to visit and appeared to provide greater intellectual stimulation.

One final phenomenon demonstrated in this rural pair replicated in other rural districts. In these districts, changes were brought to ineffective schools. The changes did not always raise

achievement, but in every case something was attempted. At Roosevelt the arrival of a new principal brought more order and higher achievement. At other rural negative outliers, a variety of interventions were attempted, from new principals to new buildings. We have speculated elsewhere (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1991) that perhaps small rural districts are more attentive to their school's needs.

In the urban and suburban pairs of LSES schools, we saw some schools which remained ineffective throughout the study. In some of those schools there was no evidence of a systematic effort to improve the particular schools based on their needs. Rural communities, however, appeared to define a level below which schools were not allowed to fall. While the "ceiling" of services available in rural areas may not be as high as in some suburban/urban environments, the floor does not appear to be as low.

A final aspect of the rural cases has to do with the qualities affecting school effects in rural schools. Our observers were repeatedly struck by the non-flashy, catch-phrase-free, atheoretical nature of rural schooling. Adults and children appeared to be going about the logistics of schooling in more or less active, and more or less common sense fashions. The typical rural school had a more reflective, more even-paced approach. This conservatism buffered the rural schools from many of the worst aspects of educational fads. Our only reservation was that it appeared to simultaneously block out some of the more thoughtful movements in education. Rural schools appear to offer many opportunities for students to experience more extended study of the natural sciences, reading of whole books, cooperative learning, and other, less faddish changes. Yet we saw almost none of these in the rural sites.

Educational Importance

Several states (e.g. South Carolina, Louisiana, California, and Florida) have funded school award programs in which more effective schools receive monetary awards. These programs have been instituted in spite of contradictory evidence regarding the stability of school effectiveness even over relatively short periods of time. Typically these programs base awards on information gleaned from

the residual scores from regression analyses on archived data.

The current study followed sixteen schools across a seven year period and found stability of school effects at over half of them. While there was also evidence for considerable change over time, the reported stability in this study adds evidence for the persistence of school effects over time. Such evidence, however, is probably only attainable through in-depth case studies in which data on a wide variety of school effectiveness indicators, not just student achievement on standardized tests, are available. Certainly, an adequate understanding of the complex processes underlying long term school stability or change can be attained only through the use of historical case studies, or variants thereof.

States considering giving or currently giving monetary rewards should base effective school status on more indicators than just cross-sectional achievement scores. Some form of periodical site visit involving collection of school/teacher process data would yield more accurate and stable indices of school effectiveness.

This paper also pointed out important context differences in school effectiveness based on urbanicity. Table 4 summarizes the major context differences between urban, suburban, and rural schools on 16 dimensions observed during the LSES.

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Table 1

Pairwise Comparison of Historically Effective (HES) and Ineffective (HIS) Schools at LSES-IV

School Pairs	Classification Across Time	Socio-economic Status of Students	Stability of Faculty
** 1	HIS = stable HES = stable	Still well matched	HES more stable than HIS
2	HIS = improving HES = stable	HIS has higher SES than HES	HES more stable than HIS
3	HIS = improving HES = declining	Still well matched, but HES has more foreign students	HES changed principal; staff stability the same
* 4	HIS = improving HES = declining	Still well matched	HIS changed principal and much of faculty; HES stayed stable
*** 5	HIS = stable HES = stable	Still well matched	Both equally stable
6	HIS = stable HES = stable ineffective	Appears well matched, but data problems at HES	Both changed principals and much of staff
7	HIS = improving HES = declining	HIS has much higher SES than HES	HIS much more stable, as HES changed principal and faculty
8	HIS = stable HES = stable	Still well matched	HES changed principal and much of staff; HIS more stable

* Urban case studies
** Suburban case studies
*** Rural case studies

Table 1 (continued)

Pairwise Comparison of Historically Effective (HES) and Ineffective (HIS) Schools at LSES-IV

School Pairs	High Inference Teaching Behavior	Time on Task	Hierarchical Dimension of Schooling
** 1	HES better than HIS	HES much better than HIS	HES much better than HIS
2	HES better than HIS	Very close scores with both improved from LSES-III	HIS better than HES
3	HES better than HIS	Very close scores, with HES declining from LSES-III	HES better than HIS
* 4	HIS greatly improved and better than HES	HIS better than HES	HIS better than HES
*** 5	HES slightly better than HIS	HIS better than HES	Very close scores
6	HIS better than HES	Very close scores	HIS better than HES, but both socres low
7	Very close scores	HES slightly higher than HIS	Very close scores
8	HES better than HIS	HES slightly higher than HIS	HES better than HIS, but both scores low

* Urban case studies
** Suburban case studies
*** Rural case studies

Table 1 (continued)

Pairwise Comparison of Historically Effective (HES) and Ineffective (HIS) Schools at LSES-IV

School Pairs	Criterion Referenced Tests	Norm Referenced Tests	Change in Student Absenteeism
** 1	HES much better than HIS	HES much better than HIS	HES = improved HIS = declined
2	HIS slightly better overall, but HES much better in one subject area	HIS better on raw scores; HES better on gain and residual scores	Both improved
3	Very close scorces	HIS better than HES	HES = improved HIS = declined
* 4	HIS better than HES	HIS better than HES	HES = declined HIS = improved
*** 5	HES much better than HIS	HES better than HIS	HES = improved HIS = declined
6	HES better than HIS	Very close scores, especially at Spring testing	HES = not available HIS = declined
7	HIS much better than HES	HIS much better than HES	HES = improved HIS = declined
8	Very close scores, with HES scoring better on more subtests	Very close raw scores; HES much better on gain and residual scores	HES = improved HIS = declined

* Urban case studies
** Suburban case studies
*** Rural case studies

Table 2
Comparisons between Herbert Hoover Elementary School at LSES-III and LSES-IV

	LSES-III		LSES-IV
1.	District-oriented principal	1.	School site oriented principal
2.	Principal not an instructional leader	2.	Principal an active instructional leader
3.	Principal unaware of problems at school	3.	Principal highly aware of problems at school
4.	School served as social service agency	4.	School's primary emphasis on academics
5.	High emphasis on PTA involvement	5.	Low emphasis on PTA involvement
6.	Principal had favorites among faculty	6.	Principal displayed no overt favoritism
7.	Underutilization of teacher aides	7.	Appropriate utilization of teacher aides
8.	Poor articulation of and understanding of goals	8.	Goals clearly stated in the "redbook"
9.	No buffer to community; parents had direct access to classrooms	9.	Buffer to the community; controlled parental access to classrooms
10.	Little or no assistance given to faculty by school leadership	10.	Direct, individualized assistance provided to faculty
11.	No use of computer for record keeping	11.	Extensive use of computer for organizational efficiency
12.	Nondepartmentalized instruction	12.	Departmentalized instruction
13.	No grade level leaders	13.	Faculty leaders at each grade level
14.	Generally negative attitude toward students; low expectations for performance	14.	More positive attitudes toward students; higher expectations for performance
15.	Poor adherence to school schedule	15.	Strict adherence to school schedule

Table 2 (continued)

	LSES-III		LSES-IV
16.	Inflexible, three step suspension process	16.	Flexible, five step suspension process
17.	Poor classroom and school level discipline	17.	Excellent classroom and school level discipline
18.	Low time-on-task	18.	High time-on-task
19.	High variance among teachers in terms of effectiveness	19.	Reduced variance among teachers in terms of effectiveness
20.	Low student achievement	20.	Improved student achievement

TABLE 3

Contrasts Between John F. Kennedy and Calvin Coolidge Elementary Schools

John F. Kennedy Elementary	Calvin Coolidge Elementary
The Principal	
1. Stable, appropriate leadership	1. Unstable, generally inappropriate leadership
2. Appropriate, informal organizational structure	2. Inappropriate, informal organizational structure
3. Shared academic leadership with faculty	3. Non-shared academic leadership
4. Resistant to external change	4. Acceptant of external change
5. Close relationship among administrators	5. Strained relationship among administrators
6. Good use of academic support staff	6. Unimaginative use of academic support staff
The Faculty	
7. Faculty is warm, friendly	7. Faculty is cold, guarded
8. Strong faculty cohesiveness	8. Lack of faculty cohesiveness
9. No obvious personality conflicts among faculty	9. Open bickering among faculty
10. Integration of support staff into faculty	10. Inappropriate and uneven integration of support staff into faculty
11. Cooperative efforts to enhance teaching	11. Top-down effects to enhance teaching
12. High faculty stability	12. Moderate to low faculty stability
13. High time-on-task and positive classroom climate	13. Low time-on-task and evidence of negative classroom climate
14. Fairly uniform teaching behaviors across classes	14. Large variances in teaching behaviors across classes
15. Assistance freely given new faculty members	15. Little assistance given new faculty members

Table 3 (continued)

John. F Kennedy Elementary		Calvin Coolidge Elementary	
	Student Level		
16.	Excellent discipline and understanding of rules	16.	Poor discipline and understanding of rules
17.	Students involved in running of school	17.	Little or no student involvement in running of school
18.	Little use of corporal punishment	18.	Excessive use of corporal punishment
19.	Student-oriented climate	19.	Adult-oriented climate
20.	Consistently high student achievement	20.	Consistently low student achievement

Table 4

Context Differences Due to Urbanicity

I. Urban Elementary Schools

A. Community and District Office
1. Adequate resources, but often inefficient delivery system
2. Typically weak community involvement, requiring strong leadership to develop
3. Community from which students are drawn may change radically, or may stay very stable
4. School may buffer itself from negative community influences

B. Leadership
1. Strong instructional leadership required for success
2. Discipline typically a problem requiring principal intervention and monitoring
3. Leadership has moderate ties to district office
4. More participation by faculty in roles such as grade-level lead teacher, due to larger school size

C. Faculty and Instructional Organization
1. Most likely to be departmentalized
2. Faculty recruitment easy or hard dependent on school's reputation; appropriate substitutes moderately easy to find
3. Variable student expectations, with present expectations bring pushed first and future expectations later
4. Large variance in faculty stability, with some schools, having great instability

D. Curriculum and Professional Development
1. Variable curriculums, some emphasizing basic skills and others a more broad curriculum
2. Moderate-high technology in classroom
3. Adequate opportunities for inservice
4. Curriculum innovation is highly varied

Table 4 (Continued)

II. Suburban Elementary Schools

A. Community and District Office
   1. Adequate resources and delivery system
   2. Intermediate level community involvement
   3. Community from which students are drawn may change due to rezoning, restructuring, etc.
   4. Typically no buffer to community influences

B. Leadership
   1. Managerial style of leadership often successful
   2. Discipline varies dependent on community, faculty, and principal characteristics
   3. Leadership has moderate ties to district office
   4. Moderate involvement by faculty in leadership roles such as assistant principal, counselor (acting as administrator), and grade-level lead teacher

C. Faculty and Instructional Organization
   1. May be departmentalized
   2. Faculty easier to recruit; appropriate substitutes typically easier to find
   3. Some focus on future expectations for students, as well as present expectations
   4. Moderately stable faculties

D. Curriculum and Professional Development
   1. Typically broader curriculum beyond basic skills
   2. Moderate-high technology in classroom
   3. Adequate opportunities for inservice
   4. Curriculum innovation of moderate to high level

Table 4 (Continued)

III. Rural Elementary Schools

A. Community and District Office
   1. Typically inadequate resources
   2. Strong community involvement
   3. Stable community
   4. No buffer to community influences

B. Leadership
   1. Personalized leadership style, intermediate between manager and initiator
   2. Discipline generally good
   3. Typically close ties to central office
   4. Less participation by faculty in roles such as grade-level teacher, due to typically smaller school size

C. Faculty and Instructional Organization
   1. Less likely to be departmentalized, due to smaller number of teachers per grade
   2. Faculty hard to recruit; qualified substitutes hard to find
   3. Focus on present expectations
   4. Stable faculty

D. Curriculum and Professional Involvement
   1. Limited curriculum, usually emphasizing basic skills
   2. Low-moderate technology in classrooms
   3. Less opportunities for inservice
   4. Curriculum innovation at low-moderate level